Albalophosaurus

View of Mount Hakusan, the mountain *Albalophosaurus* was named after

Albalophosaurus	
Temporal range: Early Cretaceous	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Chordata
Clade:	Dinosauria
Order:	†Ornithischia
Suborder:	†Ceratopsia
Genus:	†*Albalophosaurus* Ohashi & Barrett, 2009
Species:	†***A. yamaguchiorum***
Binomial name	
†***Albalophosaurus yamaguchiorum*** Ohashi & Barrett, 2009	

Albalophosaurus (meaning 'white crest lizard') is a genus of ceratopsian ornithischian dinosaur. It was described in 2009 from remains found in 1997 by Yoshinori Kobayashi from the Kuwajima Formation of central Japan, outcropping in Hakusan in the Ishikawa Prefecture.[1] The holotype, SBEI 176, consists of cranial bones from an incomplete, disarticulated skull and left lower jaw thought to belong to a single individual. The type species is named *A. yamaguchiorum*. The generic name is derived from Latin *albus*, "white", and Greek λόφος (*lophos*), "crest", a reference to the snow-covered crest of Mount Hakusan. The specific name honours Ichio Yamaguchi and Mikiko Yamaguchi, who discovered and prepared many fossils from the site.

The exact age of the strata from which the remains of *Albalophosaurus* have been found is not known because of the lack of marine beds containing index fossils,[2] but the Kuwajima Formation is known to have formed during the Early Cretaceous, most likely after the Berriasian and before the Barremian based on the ages of underlying and overlying formations.[3][4] More recent studies suggest that the age of the Kuwajima Formation is most likely Valanginian—Hauterivian, although the exact age is still uncertain.[5]

Phylogeny

Although *Albalophosaurus* was classified as a basal ceratopsian in a phylogenetic analysis conducted along with the description of the genus, only one ambiguous synapomorphy of the clade is present in the holotype, and none of the unambiguous synapomorphies that define Ceratopsia are present. Other characteristics, such as those of the dental morphology of *Albalophosaurus*, seem to suggest that the genus shares a relation to Ornithopoda. Thus the authors of the original description of the genus refer it to Cerapoda *incertae sedis*, and do not consider it to be a ceratopsian.[1] Han *et al.*, 2012 found *Albalophosaurus* to be a ceratopsian more derived than *Micropachycephalosaurus*, *Yinlong*, *Stenopelix*, and *Chaoyangosaurus*, but basal to a clade composed of *Psittacosaurus* and more derived ceratopsians.[6]

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